

*CITY OF GREENBELT, MARYLAND
BOARD OF ELECTIONS*

Agenda

November 10, 2022 – 5:30 pm

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89638801207?pwd=ZDIHZ3BNekhvYmFzVTRHdXFZWWTNCdz09>

*Dial-in: 301-715-8592
Meeting ID: 896 3880 1207
Passcode: 680278*

1. Call to order
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Approval of Minutes – 10/13/2022
4. Discussion:
5. Discussion of Proposed Council Memo on Electec payment
6. Update on Vendor Search, possible discussion with College Park, others
7. Discussion of Early Voting modifications
8. Discussion of Election Day date modification
9. Discussion of Campaign Financial Report amendment to Code, form, instructions
10. Other business
11. Schedule for Next Meeting
12. Adjournment

MEETING of the Board of Elections held Thursday, October 13, 2022.

Steven Gilbert, Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:44 p.m. virtually via Zoom.

Board members present were Patricia Evans and Beth Terry. Ms. Wanna Coker and Mr. James Williams were absent.

Staff present was Shaniya Lashley-Mullen, Assistant to the City Clerk.

Also was present Bill Orleans.

Approval of Minutes: None

Review of 2021 Municipal Election: The Board discussed issues with the vendor, mail-in voting, locations, and staffing on election day.

Other Business: The Board discussed reducing early voting hours and days. Mr. Gilbert said he would prepare a report for Council to amend the City Code.

Ms. Terry provided the Board of Election with a report she had with Ms. Anderson, Ms. Evans, the City of College Park City Clerk, and their Board of Election Chair regarding their election process and vendors.

The Board discussed the City paying Electec their entire contract. Mr. Gilbert stated that he would prepare a memo for Council.

The Board discussed possibly moving the Municipal Election from the 1st Tuesday following the 1st Monday to the 1st Sunday following the 1st Saturday. Mr. Gilbert stated that he would prepare a memo for Council. Ms. Terry said she would follow up with the City of College Park's City Clerk for further information regarding their election process.

The Board discussed inviting the City of Takoma Park Board Election and Fort Orange Press to the next couple of meetings.

There was a discussion amongst the Board regarding the Financial Disclosure Report Forms. Ms. Lashley-Mullen informed the Board that the Council would like the Board of Elections and the Ethics Commission to have a joint meeting to discuss the Financial Disclosure Report Forms and their overlapping roles. Mr. Gilbert said he would contact the Ethics Commission Chair for further information.

Next Meeting: The Board scheduled the next meeting for Thursday, November 10, via Zoom at 5:30 p.m.

Mr. Gilbert moved it to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed 3-0.

The meeting ended at approximately 7:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Shaniya Lashley-Mullen, Assistant to the City Clerk

DRAFT 27 Oct 2022

MEMO TO COUNCIL RE ELECTIONS:
CHANGES TO DATE OF ELECTION DAY
AND EARLY VOTING

TO: City Council, City of Greenbelt

FR: Board of Elections

RE: Payment to ElecTech for 2021 Election Services

After Labor Day, the Board of Elections was advised, after inquiry, that the City had – apparently early this year – paid in full all charges submitted by ElecTech, the New Jersey firm that provided equipment and services on Election Day 2021 and also, in what we found was thoroughly unsatisfactory work, the mail-in voting applications and ballots.

To summarize what happened last year, we would briefly note that (a) the Election Day services, the equipment and e-poll book setup, went reasonably smoothly, without serious problem, but (b) mail-in ballots distribution to voters who requested them was largely late and untimely, and inconvenienced a large number of voters who were using the procedure for the first time.

We wish Council and Administration to note that the Board of Elections at no time approved a full payment to this vendor, ElecTech, nor were we consulted before the payment was made. If we'd been asked – as the agency, after all, for whom the services were contracted – we would have advised, unanimously, that the part of ElecTech's invoices that covered the mail-in balloting should have been paid only after a substantial discount, or penalty.

November _____, 2022
Page Two

We are not sure how or when the decision was made to pay this vendor in full. At this point it seems far too late to do anything about what months ago occurred, but we did wish the Council to know that we have begun the process of finding a new vendor for the 2023 election.

We thank the Council members for their kind attention, and are available to answer questions, if Council wishes.

BOE2300CouncilMemoElecTechPaymentDraft

DRAFT 27 Oct 2022

MEMO TO COUNCIL RE ELECTIONS:
CHANGES TO DATE OF ELECTION DAY
AND EARLY VOTING

TO: City Council, City of Greenbelt

FR: Board of Elections

RE: Proposed Code and Charter Amendments
Early Voting and Election Date Sections and Charter Section 14

The Board of Elections, at meetings in October and November, addressed the issues of early voting, as provided in Code Section 8-13, and the date of Election Day, as covered in Code Section 8-1 and Charter Section 14. Attached are proposed amendments to alter these Code and Charter provisions.

EARLY VOTING

Board and Council members have questioned the effectiveness of Greenbelt's current system of early voting. Intended to offer convenience to citizens who may have difficulty voting on Election Day, and also to encourage wider voter participation, our early voting process, as set out in Section 8-13 of Code, is used far less often than the conventional Election Day procedures in polling places, and also less often than mail-in (formerly "absentee") procedures, which were substantially changed for the 2021 election.

Indeed, in a survey we conducted in 2021, the Board found that Greenbelt has far more early voting days than do any surrounding cities, including Laurel, Bowie, Hyattsville, New Carrollton and College Park. We have many more early voting days, and a much lower voter "density," than any nearby municipality.

November ____, 2022

Page Two

The proposed Code amendment, as reflected in Attachment A, compresses our early voting from four weeks and weekends to one weekend and the following five weekdays. At the same time, the polling places open for early voting are expanded, so that voters have more convenient options.

DATE FOR ELECTION DAY

Board members also believe that voter convenience and participation will be enhanced if the date of Election Day is changed from the conventional Tuesday in November to the first Sunday after the second Saturday. This change will place the new date between (and including) November 9th and 15th.

Changing the normal Election Day from an early Tuesday to a mid-month Sunday in November will, we think, maximize voter convenience and increase voter participation. On the Sunday of the election, voters may attend their (or any other) polling place, from mid-morning to mid-evening, and cast their ballots.

Attachments B and C amend Code and Charter to change the Election Day date.

We are of course available to discuss these matters at a work session chosen by Council.

ATTACHMENTS

A: Amendment to Code Section 8-13, Early Voting

B: Amendment to Code Section 8-1, Election Day and Precincts

C: Amendment to Charter Section 14, Elections Generally

BOE2300CouncilMemoElecTechPaymentDraft

DRAFT 27 Oct 2022

GREENBELT ELECTION CODE AMENDMENT:
EARLY VOTING PROCEDURES

Sec. 8-13. Early voting.

(a) Residents of the city who are qualified voters registered with the Prince George's County Board of Elections have the right to vote by early voting in municipal elections, as provided in this section.

(b) For purposes of this Code, an "early voting ballot" is a ballot not used in a polling place on election day nor for "[absentee] *mail-in* voting," and "election day" means the day of a municipal election.

(c) Voting by early voting in municipal elections shall be as follows:

(1) Early voting [will] *is to* begin on the [third] *second* Saturday prior to the election and end on the [first] Friday prior to the election[on the following schedule: Third Saturday (9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.) and third Sunday (11 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.) prior to the election in Greenbelt East; second Saturday (9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.) and second Sunday (11 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.) prior to the election in Greenbelt West; and Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays (9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.) and Tuesdays (9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.) in the municipal building throughout this period]. *On the Saturday and Sunday that begin the early voting period, all polling places that are open on election day shall be open for early voting, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. On the Monday through Friday during the early voting period, all polling places open on election day shall be open for early voting, from 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., except that the office of the clerk of the council shall be open in place of the community center polling place.*

(2) To cast an early voting ballot, the voter must complete the ballot on the premises, place it in a blank, sealed envelope, and then place the sealed envelope in the early voting envelope on which are written the voter's name as registered and signature. The voter shall place the early

voting envelope in the designated early voting ballot box. Early voting envelopes that contain more than one blank, sealed envelope shall be kept by the city clerk, [and] *but* those early voting ballots shall not be counted. If a ballot is submitted in a properly signed and sealed early voting envelope without being contained in a blank, sealed envelope, then the board shall determine by majority vote whether a violation of the voter's privacy has occurred [or] *and* whether the ballot may be counted. If a determination is made to count the ballot, then a member of the board shall place the ballot in a blank, sealed envelope.

(3) The city clerk shall deliver the ballot box containing the early voting sealed, blank envelopes to the early voting clerks appointed by the board of elections for the counting of early voting ballots. The city clerk shall advise the early voting clerks of the numbers of early voting ballots cast, and shall keep the same record of the early voting ballots as is kept by the clerks of election at their polling places.

(4) Upon receipt of the ballot box containing the early voting sealed, blank envelopes, the early voting clerks shall open the sealed envelopes and determine that no envelope contains more than one (1) ballot. Ballots in sealed envelopes that contain more than one (1) ballot shall not be counted.

(5) If an early voting ballot is challenged by the city clerk or an early voting ballot clerk for noncompliance with this section, it may not be counted until the board of elections determines that it is valid. [Early voting ballot validity shall be determined by rules adopted by the board.] (Ord. No. 1302, 8-10-09) Secs. 8-14--8-20. Reserved.

KEY:

[Brackets] indicate deletions from existing law.

Italics indicate additions to existing law.

BOE2300EarlyVotingDraft

DRAFT 27 Oct 2022
GREENBELT CHARTER AMENDMENT:
CHANGE TO DATE OF ELECTION DAY

Sec. 14. Generally.

(a) Council elections. The regular election for members of the city council shall be held on the first [Tuesday following] *Sunday after* the [first Monday] *second Saturday* of November in odd-numbered years. All elections shall be nonpartisan.

(b) Referendum. By resolution, the council shall direct to be placed upon the ballot for any regular council election or duly called special election such questions as may be required to be submitted to the voters by this charter or the laws of Maryland and such questions as it may choose to submit to the voters. The resolution, which shall be adopted not later than the sixth Monday preceding a regular council election or at the time a special election is called, shall include the exact wording of each question to be submitted to the voters.

(c) Special elections. The city council, or board of elections when authorized by this charter, shall order the holding of a special election and shall fix the time of the election. Special elections shall be held only for purposes authorized by this charter or the laws of the State of Maryland. Insofar as they may be applicable, special elections shall be subject to the provisions of this charter relating to regular council elections.

(d) Notice of elections. The city clerk shall give at least twenty-one (21) days' notice of every election by an advertisement published in a newspaper of general circulation in the city. No special election shall be set for a time that does not allow the city clerk to give the notice as required herein.

(1937, Ch. 532, § 12, Char. Am. Res. No. 89, 6-8-66; Char. Am. Res. No. 1975-3, § 1, 4-7-75; Char. Am. Res. No. 1986-1, § 1, 10-7-86; Char. Am. Res. No. 1990-1, § 1, 12-17-90; Char. Am. Res. No. 2002-2, § 3, 1-28-02)

KEY:

[Brackets] indicate deletions from existing law.

Italics indicate additions to existing law.

BOE2300CharterElectionDayDraft

DRAFT 27 Oct 2022

GREENBELT ELECTION CODE AMENDMENT:
CHANGE TO DATE OF ELECTION DAY

Sec. 8-1. *Election Day*; Precincts.

(a) Election day for municipal elections shall be on the first Sunday after the second Saturday in November, in odd-numbered years.

(b) On Election day, the polls shall be open from 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

(c) For purposes of [city] municipal elections, the city shall be divided into five (5) precincts, and the boundaries of each precinct shall be the same as those established by the county for those portions of precincts 3, 6, 8, 13 and 18 of the Twenty-first Election District located within the city.

(Code 1971, § 7-1; Ord. No. 1300, 6-22-09)

KEY:

[Brackets] indicate deletions from existing law.

Italics indicate additions to existing law.

